

Middle Ridge State School

Executive Summary





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1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the Education Improvement Branch (EIB) at **Middle Ridge State School** from **2 to 4 November 2021**.

The report presents an evaluation of the school's performance against the nine domains of the [National School Improvement Tool](#). It also recommends improvement strategies for the school to implement in consultation with its regional office and school community.

The report's executive summary outlines key findings from the review and key improvement strategies that prioritise future directions for improvement.

Schools will publish the executive summary on the school website within two weeks of receiving the report.

The principal will meet with their Assistant Regional Director to discuss the review findings and improvement strategies.

For more information regarding the EIB and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the EIB [website](#).

1.1 Review team

Greg Brand	Internal reviewer, EIB (review chair)
Anthony Ryan	Peer reviewer
Julie Warwick	Peer reviewer
Jo Diesel	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Spring Street, Middle Ridge	
Education region:	Darling Downs South West Region	
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6	
Enrolment:	755	
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	4.4 per cent	
Students with disability:	Education Adjustment Program (EAP) percentage:	4.5 per cent
	Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) percentage:	11.1 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	1055	
Year principal appointed:	July 2015	



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, two deputy principals, Business Manager (BM), Head of Department – Curriculum (HOD-C), Instructional Coach (IC), Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), guidance officer, chaplain, three Support Teachers Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN), 45 teachers, 15 teacher aides, two administration officers, Information Technology (IT) technician, grounds officer, 163 students and 49 parents.

Community and business groups:

- Four representatives of the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C), director of Goodstart Early Learning, coordinator of Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) and local Adopt-a-Cop.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principals of Centenary Heights State High School, Gabbinbar State School and Rangeville State School, and regional behaviour coach of Denise Kable Campus.

Government and departmental representatives:

- State Member for Toowoomba South and ARD.



1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2021	MRSS Improvement priorities 2021
Investing for Success 2021	Strategic Plan 2018–2021
School budget overview	School Data Profile (Semester 1, 2021)
OneSchool and SORD data	Headline Indicators (October 2020 release)
Staff Information Booklet	MRSS Whole School approach to pedagogy
MRSS Inclusive Practices Inquiry	Health & Wellbeing Action Plan 2021
Collegial Engagement Framework	Wellbeing for learning framework
School Opinion Survey 2021	Student Code of Conduct 2020 - 2023
School Data Plan	K to 2 CoP Action Plan
High Able and Gifted Learners policy	STEM Strategic Action Plan 2019 - 2021
MRSS Explicit Instruction Guide	Every student succeeding – Regional SDR
Whole School Approach to the Teaching of Reading	MRSS Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Plan
MRSS Whole school approach to differentiation	School newsletters, website and Facebook page
Leadership Roles & Responsibilities Overview	



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

The school's values of 'honesty, respect, co-operation, learning, kindness, social justice and self-discipline' define a school community committed to seeing every student succeed.

These values are deeply embedded in the culture of the school and guide the way staff, students and community members engage with and support one another. Staff are dedicated to improving their practice and take great pride in delivering quality learning experiences for students. Parents and key community stakeholders clearly express their appreciation for the high levels of professionalism and genuine pride school leaders and staff demonstrate each and every day. Students articulate greatly valuing the school's high expectations for learning and express an appreciation for the range of engaging programs and learning opportunities on offer.

The promotion of a high-performance culture is central to supporting the school's Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA).

The school identifies Explicit Instruction (EI) by Archer and Hughes¹ as guiding the school's approach to pedagogy. The school implements a comprehensive agreed set of collegial engagement processes to support the development and improvement of pedagogical practices through observation, reflection, coaching and mentoring processes. Teachers indicate a consistent approach across the school for these processes. They describe the benefits they gain from the coaching and lesson modelling they are able to engage in with the Instructional Coach (IC) and Head of Special Education Services (HOSES). Staff express valuing feedback and articulate that quality feedback supports them to understand the expectations of pedagogy and improves their teaching.

School leaders are driving an EIA, reflecting the three key priority areas of teaching, wellbeing and inclusion.

School leaders and staff articulate the increasing diversity of their context and conscientiously develop strategies to support the needs of all students. The principal is committed to inclusion and articulates improvements in inclusive practices since the last school review. Some teachers articulate they would appreciate greater input into reviewing the effectiveness of the school's approach to inclusion to ensure it achieves positive outcomes for teachers and students. School leaders recognise the need to review and refine the school's EIA to ensure inclusive practices to support every student succeeding are clearly understood and progressed in a manageable and sustainable way.

¹ Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2011). *Explicit instruction: Effective and efficient teaching*. Guilford Press.



Staff set high expectations of themselves and are universally committed to the success of every student.

Since the last review a major change process through an inclusive practice inquiry has been undertaken. School leaders articulate the change process has initially focused on developing a vision of inclusion, building a culture of collective ownership and a shift to more inclusive language and terminology. Teachers express a desire to ensure the school's approach to inclusion is responsive to student needs and is sustainable. Some staff describe the positive impact a co-teaching model is having in meeting the needs of the diverse range of learners in their class.

A Health and Wellbeing Action Plan outlines an extensive range of actions and activities to promote staff wellbeing.

School leaders prioritise wellbeing for staff and articulate the workshop 'Happiness Venture'² at the commencement of the school year for all staff was highly successful. A staff wellbeing committee coordinates wellness activities and undertakes staff surveys to explore solutions and considerations to address staff workload and professional wellbeing matters raised. Staff articulate the need for greater levels of collaboration, clarity and capability development for themselves to have confidence in meeting the expectations of the school's improvement journey.

The principal and school leaders are committed to driving improvements in pedagogy.

Staff identify a range of pedagogical approaches to support the teaching of the Australian Curriculum (AC). Staff express a desire to expand their pedagogical repertoire to cater for the diverse learners in their classrooms. Some staff identify that areas of the curriculum require different pedagogical approaches. Some teachers identify Age-appropriate pedagogies (AAP) as a suitable approach in the early years. The IC has commenced developing a whole-school approach to pedagogy that is aligned to some curriculum areas. School leaders acknowledge the need to continue refining the school's pedagogical approaches to ensure consistency of understanding and implementation.

School leaders and staff describe a strong commitment to a personal and collective responsibility and accountability to maximise learning outcomes for all students.

Significant funding is dedicated to a range of key actions in developing an expert teaching team. Teachers articulate a need for opportunities to expand and reflect on their repertoire of practices to confidently meet the needs of all students. They indicate they would value opportunities to reflect and share their practice with colleagues, student support staff and school leaders. Teachers express they would welcome the opportunity to meet and plan regularly with student support services staff. Teacher aides indicate they would value Professional Development (PD) in key intervention strategies, to develop their expertise to support the range of students they engage with each day.

² Powell, T. (2021). <https://tonipowell.me/>



A Professional Learning Community (PLC) is recognised by school leaders and teachers as an invaluable school forum.

Staff indicate a supportive and collegial culture exists across teams. The school's commitment and significant investment in the evidence-based practice of PLC provide a vehicle to build teacher capability. Teachers are provided with release time to meet with school leaders in their cohort PLCs to engage in data conversations, moderation, case management and support planning, pedagogy and curriculum planning. Teachers speak positively of the time within their PLCs and the benefits they gain in collaborations with their colleagues and with the Head of Department – Curriculum (HOD-C) and IC. Teachers express a clear desire to see PLCs continue and be further strengthened.

School leaders are committed to delivering research-based strategies for school improvement.

Staff and students confidently talk of the use of success criteria and learning intentions. Learning walls are a signature practice in all classrooms. There is an expectation that everyone will have a learning wall for English. Learning walls include the assessment task, marking guide, success criteria, learning intention, summations of key learnings and exemplars. Staff articulate the learning walls assist them to remain focused with their teaching. Students identify the learning wall as supporting their understanding of the expectations for their work in the unit. Many students excitedly share their knowledge of the artefacts on the learning wall.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Collaboratively narrow and refine the EIA to achieve clarity and a shared understanding and commitment to the key strategies, approaches and practices underpinning all students succeeding.

Collaboratively refine the school's vision and model of inclusion to provide greater clarity for all, ensuring the model is responsive to student needs and is sustainable.

Further strengthen the school's approach to staff wellbeing with enhanced levels of clarity, collaboration and capability development in meeting the expectations of the school's improvement journey.

Review, refine and document the school's approaches to pedagogy to ensure they reflect agreed pedagogical practices to engage all students across the AC, are considered in planning and consistently implemented across the school.

Prioritise offering a range of ongoing learning experiences to meet the professional needs of staff to expand their repertoire of practices and confidently meet the needs of all students.